

(10 May 2022) The Star, p.1  
Stakeholders want DBKL to allocate more funds for infrastructure projects such as drainage, multi-storey carparks and recreational spaces in its 2023 budget.

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KUALA Lumpur residents have high expectations of the quality of public services provided by government agencies.

They want their views taken into account during the planning process for the yearly budget to ensure the funds will be used to make the capital city a better place to work and live in.

Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) is currently seeking feedback from stakeholders for its 2023 budget.

It is gathering input on matters such as cleanliness, roads and drainage as well as maintenance of public housing and facilities, among others.

Several residents associations spoke to *StarMetro* about what they want DBKL to focus on next year.

### Upgrading infrastructure

The flash floods that hit several major roads in late April have once again raised concerns over poor drainage in Kuala Lumpur.

Brickfields Rukun Tetangga chairman SKK Naidu said a better flood mitigation plan was needed, including more efficient drainage, in view of higher rainfall.

"The water level at Sungai Klang will rise after just an hour of heavy rain.

"Several parts of Brickfields are at risk of flooding when this happens," he said.

On traffic issue, Kepong community activist Yee Poh Ping said existing roads could not cope with the higher volume.

He said more new developments were being approved by DBKL without proper consideration for the roads and their capacity.

He noted that three main roads – Jalan Kuching, Jalan Ipoh and Jalan Kepong – faced daily congestion.

"Too many high-rise projects are being built in these areas.

"Long-time residents are anxious that these projects will adversely affect their quality of life," he added.

Taman Tun Dr Ismail Residents Association chairman Abdul Hafiz Abu Bakar proposed that more multi-storey carparks be built in commercial areas to reduce congestion caused by those who park illegally on streets.

"There are simply not enough on-street parking bays, causing people to double and triple-park.

"DBKL should work with residents and an independent consultant to come up with a traffic management plan," he added.

Seputeh MP Teresa Kok said many roads in her constituency were pitted with potholes.

"Drains in some old housing areas also need to be upgraded to prevent flash floods," she said.

She stressed that Kuala Lumpur MPs should be consulted in the drafting of the budget so that DBKL would be aware of the improvements needed in the respective constituencies.

Malaysian Federation of Hawkers and Petty Traders Association wants DBKL to upgrade food courts and wet markets in the city.

Its president Datuk Seri Rosli Sulaiman said the local authority should also consider giving traders discounts on licence and rental fees.

# Building a better KL



According to the Federal Territories Ministry, DBKL's finances have been affected after it waived late payment charges for assessment tax during the Covid-19 pandemic. — Bernama

# 'City Hall must beef up enforcement'

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"Many of us are still recovering from the economic downturn caused by the Covid-19 pandemic," he added.

## Stronger enforcement

Taman Desa Residents Association (TDRA) said DBKL should spend more on enforcement activities and go after those who break the rules.

TDRA treasurer Koh Swee Hyong cited as an example businesses in nearby commercial areas, which he said were discarding waste into drains.

"This has caused blockage in water flow, which in turn attracts pests to the area.

"The problem has gotten so bad that I once saw rats climbing up trees there," he said.

He added that the issue had persisted despite a *gotong-royong* organised by TDRA to clean the drains.

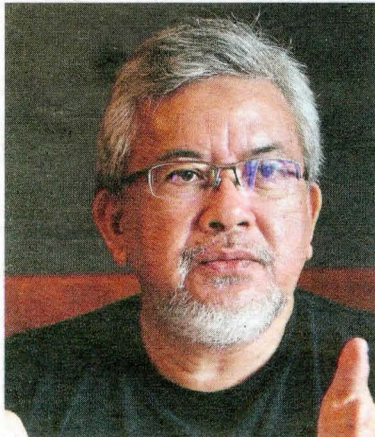
"Unlike DBKL, we cannot undertake such activities on a regular basis.

"We need stronger enforcement to deal with the problem," said Koh.

Bangsar Baru Residents Association secretary Prem Kumar Nair also called for more effective enforcement by DBKL.

He said the local authority should step up its monitoring of entertainment outlets in the area. He complained that the customers' drunken and disorderly behaviour disrupted peace in the neighbourhood.

"Many residents here are senior citizens and they should not have to put up with the noise which continues into the wee hours of the morning," he added.



Abdul Hafiz: Constructing more multi-storey carparks will reduce illegal parking.

Prem Kumar also wanted City Hall to issue more summonses to traffic offenders, especially those who park illegally.

"Traffic obstruction due to double-parking is all too common, while some vehicles are also parked on road shoulders and kerbs," he said.

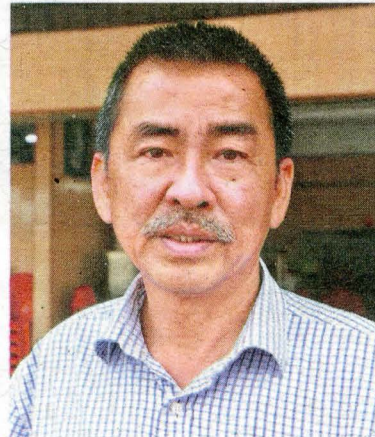
Another pressing matter, he highlighted, was the rise in shared accommodation including holiday rentals in Kuala Lumpur, which had sparked safety and security concerns.

Prem Kumar said some homeowners in Bangsar Baru had partitioned their property so they could rent to more people.

"As a result, we have many strangers coming and going in our neighbourhood.

"This has also caused more vehicles to be parked in this housing area.

"In addition, there is an increased risk of fire due to many people sharing the same living



Yee: DBKL branch managers should go to the ground to find out problems at the constituency level.

quarters," he said.

He called on DBKL to regulate the industry before a disaster happened.

Koh also raised concerns about earth movement at a slope near SMK Taman Desa.

"There is a row of huge trees on top of the slope.

"Everything could come crashing down, endangering passersby.

"DBKL should issue a notice to the landowner to trim the trees," he said.

## Parks and recreation

Urbanites want more parks and for existing greenery to be preserved.

Abdul Hafiz said DBKL should allocate a bigger budget to build recreational areas, especially on idle land.

"DBKL must also ensure better access by providing dedicated walkways and bicycle lanes," he said.

Yee agreed that there should be

more places outdoors for families to spend quality time together.

"DBKL should consider building football fields, basketball courts and children's playgrounds in each constituency.

"Such places are needed so that youngsters have a proper venue to take part in healthy activities, rather than going on the streets and contributing to the *mat lajak* problem," he said.

Naidu said DBKL should hold more public engagement sessions before undertaking any project, to avoid wasting taxpayers' money.

He cited the installation of tactile pathways in the area, which he said was done without consultation with residents, especially the visually impaired community.

"There were complaints that the previous tiles were slippery and DBKL had to fork out more money to replace them," he pointed out.

Yee opined that DBKL branch managers at the parliamentary constituency level needed to be more visible.

"These managers are supposed to act as a bridge between the authority and local communities.

"They should go down to the ground to check on local issues and not wait until people complain before taking action," he said.

Abdul Hafiz voiced concerns over frequent amendments to the Kuala Lumpur Structure Plan 2020.

"DBKL must ensure the plan is adhered to, but frequent amendments have raised doubts among the people.

"What is the point of gazetting a plan only for it to be changed every year?" he said.

DBKL's 2022 budget saw a 1.9% increase at RM2.7bil from RM2.653bil in the preceding year.

On March 23, Federal Territories Minister Datuk Seri Dr Shahidan Kassim told Dewan Negara that several initiatives by DBKL during the Covid-19 pandemic had impacted its finances.

"Among these were assistance given to petty traders, low-cost housing residents and the homeless as well as cancellation of late payment fee for assessment tax," he was quoted as saying.

He said DBKL used to receive a large sum from Finance Ministry, which covered its management and development expenditure.

"The Federal Government once gave RM130mil to DBKL for management in 2014, but this amount has decreased every year.

"No such allocation was received in 2019 while in 2021, RM2mil was given," he added.

Stakeholders in Kuala Lumpur can give their feedback on the 2023 budget before May 31 at <https://sites.google.com/view/ideabelanjawan2023>

Malaysian Federation of Hawkers and Petty Traders Association wants DBKL to give traders discounts on rental and licence fees. — Filepic

